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Teachers' Strategies in Managing English Classrooms for Active Learning
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ABSTRACT

This study examines teachers' strategies in managing English classrooms to promote active learning. Effective classroom management is essential in English language teaching, as it supports student engagement, interaction, and meaningful language use. A qualitative descriptive research design was employed to explore how teachers organize classroom activities, manage interactions, and address challenges in implementing active learning. The participants of this study were English teachers selected through purposive sampling based on their teaching experience and involvement in interactive learning practices. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The data were analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques, with triangulation applied to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. The results indicate that teachers employed various strategies to facilitate active learning, including establishing clear classroom rules and routines, organizing pair and group work, managing instructional time effectively, and fostering positive teacher-student relationships. These strategies were found to enhance student participation, confidence, and engagement in English learning activities. However, challenges such as large class sizes, mixed proficiency levels, and limited resources were also identified. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrated adaptability by modifying classroom management practices to sustain active learning. In conclusion, effective classroom management strategies are crucial in supporting active learning in English classrooms. The findings of this study provide practical insights for English teachers and educational institutions in improving classroom management practices to enhance students' English learning experiences.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; AI-powered tools; Speaking fluency; English as a Foreign Language (EFL); Language learning technology;

INTRODUCTION

Effective classroom management is widely recognized as a fundamental element in the success of English language teaching, particularly in fostering active learning environments. In English classrooms, where interaction, communication, and student participation are central to language acquisition, the role of the teacher extends beyond delivering instructional content to creating a learning atmosphere that encourages engagement, collaboration, and meaningful use of language. Poor classroom management may lead to passive learning, limited student interaction, and reduced opportunities for practicing English, which ultimately hinders language development.

Active learning in English education emphasizes students' involvement in learning processes through discussion, problem-solving, group work, and communicative activities. Such an approach requires teachers to employ effective classroom management strategies that balance control and flexibility. Teachers are expected to organize classroom activities, manage time efficiently, establish clear rules, and maintain positive teacher-student relationships while simultaneously encouraging learner autonomy. In this context, classroom management is not merely about discipline but about facilitating learning conditions that support active participation and communicative competence.

However, many English teachers continue to face challenges in managing classrooms for active learning, particularly in contexts where large class sizes, diverse student proficiency levels, and limited instructional resources are present. Teachers often struggle to maintain student focus during interactive activities, manage group dynamics, and ensure equal participation among learners. These challenges highlight the need for a deeper understanding of the strategies teachers employ to manage English classrooms effectively while promoting active learning.

Therefore, this study aims to explore teachers' strategies in managing English classrooms to support active learning. By examining teachers' planning, instructional practices, and classroom interaction management, the study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on English language teaching and classroom management. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for English teachers, teacher educators, and policymakers in designing more effective classroom management practices that enhance active learning and improve students' English learning outcomes.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore teachers' strategies in managing English classrooms for active learning. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows for an in-depth understanding of teachers' classroom management practices, instructional decisions, and interactions within natural classroom settings.

The research was conducted at a secondary school where English is taught as a foreign language. The participants consisted of English teachers who were selected using purposive sampling, based on their teaching experience and active involvement in implementing interactive learning strategies in their classrooms. This sampling technique ensured that the participants possessed relevant knowledge and experience related to the focus of the study.

Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Classroom observations were carried out to examine teachers' classroom management strategies during English learning activities, including the organization of learning tasks, student grouping, time management, and teacher–student interactions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into teachers' perceptions, rationales, and challenges in managing classrooms for active learning. In addition, documentation such as lesson plans, teaching materials, and classroom rules was analyzed to support and validate the observational and interview data.

The data analysis followed the procedures of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. First, the collected data were organized and reduced by selecting relevant information related to classroom management strategies. Second, the data were systematically displayed in narrative and thematic forms to identify recurring patterns and categories. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the findings and relating them to existing theories and previous studies on classroom management and active learning in English language teaching.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, triangulation of data sources and techniques was applied. Observational data were cross-checked with interview results and documentation to enhance credibility. Ethical considerations were also addressed by obtaining informed consent from the participants and ensuring confidentiality throughout the research process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this study reveal that English teachers employed various classroom management strategies to promote active learning. One of the dominant strategies identified was the establishment of clear classroom rules and routines at the beginning of the learning process. These rules were communicated consistently and reinforced throughout classroom activities, which helped create an orderly learning environment and encouraged students to participate actively without fear of disruption.

Another important finding indicates that teachers effectively managed classroom interaction through flexible seating arrangements and group work organization. Students were frequently divided into pairs or small groups to support collaborative learning and peer interaction. This strategy was found to increase student engagement, particularly during speaking and discussion activities, as learners felt more comfortable expressing their ideas in smaller groups.

The study also found that time management played a crucial role in supporting active learning. Teachers carefully allocated time for each learning activity, including warm-up sessions, core tasks, and reflection. Clear time limits were provided, which helped maintain students' focus and ensured that learning objectives were achieved within the available instructional time.

In addition, positive teacher–student relationships were identified as a key factor in effective classroom management. Teachers demonstrated supportive attitudes, provided constructive feedback, and encouraged student participation through praise and motivation. Such practices were observed to create a safe and supportive learning atmosphere that fostered students' confidence in using English.

Finally, the findings show that teachers faced several challenges in managing English classrooms for active learning. These challenges included varying levels of students' English proficiency, large class sizes, and limited instructional resources. Despite these obstacles, teachers adapted their classroom management strategies by simplifying instructions, using mixed-ability grouping, and incorporating varied teaching media to maintain active student involvement.

Discussion

The discussion of this study highlights the importance of teachers' classroom management strategies in supporting active learning in English classrooms. The findings indicate that the establishment of clear rules and consistent routines contributes significantly to creating a structured and supportive learning environment. This result aligns with classroom management theories which emphasize that well-defined expectations help minimize disruptive behavior and allow students to focus more effectively on learning activities. In the context of English language teaching, such structure is essential to maximize opportunities for meaningful language use.

The use of interactive learning arrangements, including pair work and small group discussions, was found to enhance students' active participation. This finding supports the principles of active learning and communicative language teaching, which stress the value of interaction in developing language skills. By organizing students into smaller groups, teachers were able to manage classroom dynamics more effectively while providing learners with greater opportunities to practice English in low-anxiety settings.

Effective time management also emerged as a crucial factor in facilitating active learning. The findings suggest that careful planning and clear time allocation help maintain lesson flow and student engagement. This result is consistent with previous studies indicating that structured lesson pacing enables teachers to balance instructional input and student-centered activities, thereby improving learning effectiveness in English classrooms.

Moreover, positive teacher–student relationships were shown to play a key role in classroom management and active learning. Teachers' supportive attitudes, constructive feedback, and encouragement fostered a safe learning environment that increased students' confidence in using English. This finding reinforces the view that emotional and social aspects of classroom management are as important as procedural control in promoting active learning.

Despite these positive outcomes, the study also identified challenges such as large class sizes, mixed proficiency levels, and limited resources. These challenges influenced the implementation of active learning strategies but did not prevent teachers from adapting their practices. The ability of teachers to adjust classroom management strategies demonstrates professional flexibility and highlights the need for ongoing teacher training and institutional support to strengthen active learning in English education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that teachers' classroom management strategies play a vital role in creating active learning environments in English classrooms. The implementation of clear classroom rules, consistent routines, and structured lesson organization was found to support student focus and participation, enabling learning activities to run effectively. The findings also demonstrate that interactive classroom arrangements, such as pair work and small group discussions, contribute positively to students' engagement and confidence in using English. Effective time management and well-planned learning stages further support the successful implementation of active learning by maintaining lesson flow and ensuring the achievement of learning objectives. In addition, positive teacher–student relationships were identified as a key factor in fostering a supportive and motivating learning atmosphere. Teachers' encouragement, feedback, and respectful communication helped reduce students' anxiety and increased their willingness to participate actively in English learning activities. Despite challenges related to class size, diverse student abilities, and limited resources, teachers were able to adapt their classroom management strategies to sustain active learning. Therefore, it is recommended that English teachers continuously develop their classroom management skills and that schools provide adequate support and professional development to enhance active learning practices in English education.

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